

5.0 CONSERVATION STRATEGIES

Implementation of the following conservation strategies is intended to minimize, or eliminate, adverse impacts that are likely to result from implementation of the management actions provided in the Lander RMP. In addition to the existing measures in the Lander RMP (items 1 through 5), the BLM has committed to implement conservation measures 1 through 10. The BLM will also consider implementing best management practices (BMPs) (items 1 through 7) to further protect the desert yellowhead and critical habitat. All conservation measures and BMPs apply to the known population of desert yellowhead and its critical habitat. In the event new populations are discovered, these measures would apply to the individual plants, and should include a 0.5-mile buffer around the new site until further investigation and consultation results in more appropriate management buffers.

EXISTING PROTECTIONS IN THE LANDER RMP

1. No activities will be permitted in habitat for Threatened and Endangered Species that would jeopardize the continued existence of such species (Lander RMP, p. 31).
2. No critical habitat will be exchanged or sold (Record of Decision, page 37, Map 19)
3. ORV use in this area is restricted to existing roads and vehicle routes (Lander RMP, p. 162; Record of Decision, p. 36).
4. Under the most recent version of the Southern Zone Suppression Plan (March 22, 2002), the desert yellowhead and its critical habitat are protected under the assigned suppression category where wildland fire is desired to manage ecosystems. The special considerations for the site specifically prohibit the use of heavy equipment, slurry dumps, or off-road travel. Should a fire occur in this area, the dispatcher is responsible for relaying this information to the firefighters (Record of Decision, page 38)
5. Institute an NSO restriction on designated desert yellowhead critical habitat for any possible future leases (Lander RMP, p. 31; Record of Decision, p. 32).

CONSERVATION MEASURES COMMITTED TO BY BLM

1. BLM agrees to withdraw the designated 360 acre critical habitat area from mineral location and entry under the General Mining Law of 1872.
2. BLM will not increase current permitted stocking levels.
3. BLM will not approve location of mineral supplements or additional water sources for livestock, wild horses, or wildlife on public lands within 2 miles of the site.
4. No supplemental feeding or straw placement can be done without proper authorization (43 Code of Federal Regulations 4140 (a)(3)) .
5. Livestock will not be intentionally herded within 0.5 mile of the desert yellowhead site, or in designated critical habitat.
6. BLM will work with all of the interested parties in the development and implementation of a monitoring plan for the desert yellowhead and its designated critical habitat. The plan will include regular patrol of the site for unlawful uses of the land, and the monitoring of invasive weed populations. This plan would also include, but is not limited to, the inventory and monitoring of all vehicle access to the area for the purpose of restricting access of vehicles that pose a threat to the desert yellowhead population.
7. Prohibit biological control of weeds in desert yellowhead habitat until the impact of the control agent has been fully evaluated and determined not to adversely affect the plant population. BLM will monitor biological control vectors.

8. Apply a COA on all APDs within the desert yellowhead site and designated critical habitat, prohibiting all surface-disturbing activities.
9. Prohibit the disposal of salable minerals in designated desert yellowhead critical habitat.
10. BLM will not conduct wild horse management actions (e.g., temporary gathering/holding facilities) within designated critical habitat.

BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

The following BMPs are to be considered on a case-by-case basis at the project level, and implemented where appropriate, to further protect the desert yellowhead and its designated critical habitat.

1. Analyze vegetation resource management actions when appropriate.
2. Conduct inventories for desert yellowhead in areas with potential habitat in the Lander FO.
3. Use a Geographic Information System (GIS)-based model of potential habitat.
4. Maintain a database of all searched potential desert yellowhead sites.
5. Train enforcement personnel on protection of the desert yellowhead and its habitat, status, and current threats.
6. Educate the resource specialists, the ranger, and the fire crew about the desert yellowhead site and its designated critical habitat to assist in project development for the general area.
7. Do not feature the desert yellowhead site in public information or recreational brochures in any form that would draw attention to the site.